

(pp. 101, 128, 154–55, 209–10, 213, 217, 229). Presuppositions—dispositions of the mind and the heart—control how we look at evidence. Familiarity with their role is all the more necessary given the difficult nature of the historical and literary topics addressed in this text, which require judgments and hypotheses, probability and sufficiency. Sustained, careful interaction with this phenomenon must be a characteristic of future scholarship and lay training.

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After Enlightenment: The Post-Secular Vision of J. G. Hamann. By John R. Betz. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009, xv + 355 pp., \$104.95.

In this well-balanced study, John R. Betz treats the enigmatic and influential eighteenth-century Prussian scholar Johann Georg Hamann (1730–88). Beginning with *Socratic Memorabilia* (1759) Hamann sought dialogue with *Aufklärers* concerning faith, reason, language, Scripture, history, and other matters surrounding the Enlightenment. He played mentor to Johann Gottfried Herder and Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, and prophet to Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel, Jean Paul, Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. While he arranged for the publication of Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, Hamann became the first and perhaps best-known critic of his fellow townsman. Furthermore, Hamann's work with language and reason marks the first linguistic turn and the initiation of post-Kantian philosophy. Years later Søren Kierkegaard opined that Hamann and Socrates were the "most brilliant minds of all time" (p. 3).

Despite Hamann's pervasive influence the "Magus of the North" has not received due attention from English-speaking scholars in the same way he has from their German peers. Hamannian scholarship in English-speaking academia has gone through a constant up-and-down struggle since the "Hamann Renaissance" of the 1950s and 1960s. Betz attributes this lacuna to at least three factors. First, Hamann does not conveniently fall into any one classification as "a philosopher, a theologian, a prophet, a humorist, an eccentric genius, a man of letters, a literary critic, or perhaps all of these at once" (p. 15). Second, Hamann's writings were never intended for a wide audience but served rather as occasional pieces for the benefit of a few. Third, Hamann's style is often cryptic, filled with allusions and parodies that test even the most skilled poly-historians.

Betz attempts to look past these difficulties to present a study of Hamann that builds upon previous scholars such as Gwen Griffith Dickson and Oswald Bayer, while also serving as a reworking of Hamann's contributions for the twenty-first century. He seeks to examine the life and writing of Hamann within the eighteenth-century context and apply Hamann's thought to today's context. By studying Hamann within an eighteenth and twenty-first century framework, Betz presents him as the founder of a "distinctly postmodern, post-secular theology" (p. 19).

The formatting of the work begins with Hamann's conversion and systematically develops his thought through a chronological examination of his works. Betz concludes the work with a discussion relating Hamann to issues of our postmodernity. Specifically, Betz contrasts Hamann's thought with Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, and Jacques Derrida.

After Enlightenment has much to offer those who are familiar with Hamann as well as those who are not. The way Betz handles Hamann's difficult writings and

communicates his thought in a clear and precise manner is praiseworthy. Of particular mention is Betz's chapter dealing with the *Herderschriften* and the issue of the origin of language. He wades masterfully through the intricate differences between Hamann's understanding of language and that of his disciple Herder. As Betz writes, "For if reason is constituted by language, but language itself is a purely natural 'invention,' then reason itself can likewise be understood in purely naturalistic and therefore purely secular terms" (p. 144).

A second admirable feature is that Betz does not deviate from the centrality of Hamann's personal faith but constantly relates what is most important to Hamann to Hamann's most important ideas. For example, Betz first addresses Hamann's understanding of a Trinitarian condescension in his chapter on the "London Writings," but throughout the book Betz continues to relate Hamann's other writings and ideas to this foundational principle that God condescends to man through nature, the incarnation, and Scripture.

A third point of commendation is the manner in which Betz discusses the importance of Hamann in our contemporary setting. This book does not merely introduce Hamann to English-speaking readers in an accessible fashion but extends Hamann's thought into our own world. It is truly exciting to see the progression of Hamannian scholarship and the many possibilities that follow. To give but one example, Hamann's notion of divine condescension links well to the issue of accommodation in Scripture, an issue that is often raised in contemporary debates over biblical inerrancy and the role of historical criticism.

An unfortunate aspect of the work is the tendency to depict Hamann as against the *Aufklärung*. Rather than understanding the Enlightenment as a wide movement of thought that would include Hamann as an *Aufklärer*, Betz advances an understanding that would exclude Hamann. It is clear that Hamann was against a hyper-rationalism present in many advocates of the Enlightenment. However, these proponents did not even agree among themselves concerning the central issue of reason. Hamann's critique should not segregate him from other *Aufklärers* but should be recognized as a voice contributing to the Enlightenment.

Nonetheless, *After Enlightenment* should be welcomed by both well-versed Hamannian scholars and the newly initiated alike. Betz incorporates difficult texts into an orderly presentation accurate to Hamann's thought and historical setting. The comprehensiveness of the study is enhanced by the ease of Betz's prose, offering a tremendous tool for understanding the enigmatic yet fruitful "Magus of the North."

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Heil und Geschichte: Die Geschichtsbezogenheit des Heils und das Problem der Heilsgeschichte in der biblischen Tradition und in der theologischen Deutung. Edited by Jörg Frey, Stefan Krauter, and Hermann Lichtenberger. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009, xxiii + 834 pp., € 199.

The 36 essays that appear in this volume were presented April 12–15, 2007 at a symposium honoring the late Martin Hengel († July 2, 2009) on the occasion of his eightieth birthday (December 14, 2006). The theme of the symposium (which Hengel himself articulates in his opening essay), "salvation and history," represents the fundamental concern of Hengel's life work. As the editors indicate, Hengel's opening essay